

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A first storage component connected to at least one second storage component via a network, said first storage component comprising:

a recording unit that records at least one content;

a control unit associated with the recording unit, the control unit generating first data registering storage capacity in use by each user of the associated recording unit;

an interface to the second storage component for receiving second data generated by a control unit of the second storage component and registering storage capacity in use by each user of a recording unit of the second storage component; and

a management table that has a first management item and a second management item,

the first management item comprising

i) the first data generated by said control unit registering the ~~for managing, for each user,~~ storage capacity in use by each user ~~users in each~~ of the recording unit of the first storage component, and

ii) the second data generated by the control unit of a ~~plurality of the second~~ storage component registering storage

capacity in use by each user of the recording unit of the second storage component ~~components~~, and

[[a]] the second management item for managing, for each user, total storage capacity that each user is allowed to use in ~~all the recording units of the first and second unit of the plurality of~~ storage components,

wherein, said ~~, and a~~ control unit ~~that~~ restricts the storage capacity in use by the users based on the management table so that the storage capacity of the recording unit used by a user does not exceed the total storage capacity that the user is allowed to use.

2. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 1,

wherein said control unit acquires data of said management table of the own storage component independently from other storage components, and updates the data of said management table based on the acquired data.

3. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 2,

wherein when a use status of said recording unit of the own storage component is changed in accordance with recording or deletion of contents, said control unit updates data of the own

storage component among data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component.

4. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 3,

wherein said control unit transmits at least one of periodically and at predetermined timing, packets describing the data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component to other storage components via said network, and updates, in accordance with data of said first management item in said management table of another storage component that is described in packets received from the other storage component via said network, data of the other storage component among the data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component.

5. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 4,

wherein said control unit transmits, among the data of the first management item in said management table of the own storage component, packets describing only the data of the own storage component, to other storage components via said network.

6. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 4,

wherein said control unit transmits, among the data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component, packets describing data of all the storage components registered in the first management item, to other storage components via said network.

7. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 4,

wherein when the packets describing the data of said first management item in said management table of another storage component are not received from another storage component for a predetermined period of time, said control unit transmits packets for turning ON a power of another storage component thereto via said network.

8. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 7,

wherein when the packets describing the data of the first management item in the management table of another storage component are not received from another storage component for a predetermined period of time after said control unit transmits the packets for turning ON the power of another storage component thereto via said network, the control unit deletes the data of another storage component from said first management item in said management table of the own storage component.

9. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 2,

wherein when at least one of registration, modification and deletion of the total storage capacity a user is allowed to use is performed, said control unit updates data of the user among data of said second management item in said management table of the own storage component.

10. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 9,

wherein when at least one of registration and modification of the total storage capacity a user is allowed to use is performed at the own storage component, said control unit makes the user select the total storage capacity the user is allowed to use within an extent not exceeding a recommended default value.

11. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said control unit does not allocate the total storage capacity in all said recording unit of said plurality of storage components as the total storage capacity each user is allowed to use so that a part of the total storage capacity in all said recording unit remains unoccupied.

12. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 9,

wherein said control unit transmits at least one of periodically and at predetermined timing, packets describing the data of said second management item in said management table of the own storage component to other storage components via said network, and updates, in accordance with data of said second management item in said management table of another storage component that is described in the packets received from the other storage component via said network, data of a user whose total usable storage capacity is registered, modified, or deleted in the other storage component among the data of the second management item in the management table of the own storage component.

13. (currently amended) The first storage component as claimed in claim 1,

wherein said management table is divided to a first management table having said first management item and a second management table having said second management item.

14. (currently amended) A storage system having a plurality of storage components interconnected via a network, ~~wherein~~ each storage component comprising:

a recording unit that records at least one content;

a management table that has a first management item for managing, for each user, storage capacity in use by users in each of the recording unit of the plurality of storage components, and a second management item for managing, for each user, total storage capacity that each user is allowed to use in all the recording unit of the plurality of storage components; and

a control unit that restricts the storage capacity in use by the users based on the management table so that the storage capacity of the recording unit used by a user does not exceed the total storage capacity that the user is allowed to use, wherein,

the first management item of each storage unit comprises

i) first data generated by said control unit of said each storage unit, the first data item registering the storage capacity in use by each user of the recording unit of said each storage component, and

ii) second data generated respectively by the control unit of each other storage component registering storage capacity in use by each user of the recording unit of said each other storage component.

15. (original) The storage system as claimed in claim 14,

wherein said control unit acquires data of said management table of the own storage component independently from other storage components, and updates the data of said management table based on the acquired data.

16. (original) The storage system as claimed in claim 15,

wherein when a use status of said recording unit of the own storage component is changed in accordance with recording or deletion of contents, said control unit updates data of the own storage component among data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component.

17. (original) The storage system as claimed in claim 16,

wherein said control unit transmits at least one of periodically and at predetermined timing, packets describing the data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component to other storage components via said network, and updates, in accordance with data of said first management item in said management table of another storage component that is described in packets received from the other storage component via said network, data of the other storage component among the data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component.



18. (original) The storage system as claimed in claim 17,

wherein said control unit transmits, among the data of the first management item in said management table of the own storage component, packets describing only the data of the own storage component, to other storage components via said network.

19. (original) The storage system as claimed in claim 17,

wherein said control unit transmits, among the data of said first management item in said management table of the own storage component, packets describing data of all the storage components registered in the first management item; to other storage components via said network.

20. (currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium recording thereon a computer program to be executed by a storage component being connected to a plurality of storage components via a network and recording at least one content, comprising:

means for creating a management table having a first management item for managing, for each user, storage capacity in use by users in each storage component, and a second management item for managing, for each user, total storage capacity that each user is allowed to use in all storage components; and

means for restricting the storage capacity in use by the users based on said management table so that the storage capacity used by a user does not exceed the total storage capacity that the user is allowed to use, wherein,

the first management item of each storage unit comprises

i) first data generated by said control unit of said each storage unit, the first data item registering the storage capacity in use by each user of the recording unit of said each storage component, and

ii) second data generated respectively by the control unit of each other storage component registering storage capacity in use by each user of the recording unit of said each other storage component.